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New Book. AKAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION.

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The myths and the Truth.

Author KOFI BEMPAH

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Preview

The Akan Akomfuo (komfuo is the Akan name for a mystic, god-man and Divine Incarnation) have perfected two purificatory rituals, Kradware and mmusuyi, that are performed, from time to time, by the individual traditional Akan to cleanse his 'sunsum' of evil contaminants. The 'sunsum' - the immortal Nyame component in the human personality - is his reality and no evil impurity must be allowed to contaminate it.

These rituals form part of the precious collection of guidelines for the realm of the spirit that has been preserved and handed down as heritage through the efforts of selfless Akomfuo.

Over nearly two centuries of the (Akan) Asante Empire, which included non-Akans in its population, each generation drew inspiration and knowledge from the previous ones, especially, in the regions of religion, mysticism, ethics, law, sociology, etc. The footprints of the Akomfuo mark out the lines of individual and social progress. The knowledge they have handed down about nature and consciousness is precious.

But, instead of preserving and drawing inspiration and knowledge from the previous generations as others before him have done, the modern 'educated' Akan is neglecting and discarding this knowledge; condemning it as invalid and worthless, and even superstition, instead of fostering it and using it with reverence. He is, even, ashamed to be associated with it.

His colonial education has destroyed his faith in the system that has been extolled by his ancestors for millennia. He has fallen under the impact of alien ways of thought that highlight material comfort, physical luxury, sensual liberty and exterior display. He threads the path of exploitation and violence, idleness and pompousness. Insatiable desire for fame and authority afflicts him.

Among most products of alien education, there is total lack of moral virtues, honesty, integrity, eagerness to serve and readiness to sacrifice. Rather, he is enslaved by the glittering fancies and fascinations of other cultures.

He has embraced, and is enthused by, a religion which compels him to acknowledge that he is a sinner who has to work hard to attain purity which he already is. If the new religions made him more caring, honest, sincere, God-fearing and less sin-loving' there would be no need for this work.

He has assumed political and judicial roles and is ruling a society, the majority of whose members live with, and cherishes, the traditional knowledge he holds in contempt and disdain. His rule can be successful, fruitful and beneficial to himself and others if he re-educates and equips himself with the philosophy underpinning his religious/spiritual heritage, instead of using political power to impose his new-found religion and its values on his people.

In Akan Traditional Religion, the author has revisited the native religion of the sophisticated Akans who built the vast Asante Empire even before the British dreamt of an empire. He has re-examined, analysed and reinterpreted this heritage from the Akan point of view rather than as part of the colonial legacy in Africa. He concludes that the Akan traditional religion is no less holy than, or the ethical values it espouses inferior to, any other religion.

Akan traditional religion proclaims that the one God is, and in, everything. (This is why Akans readily accept any name used by other communities to denote the One God). In other words, it espouses the doctrine of unity in diversity. The individual forms (bodies) are activated and operated by the same one God. The differences between individuals only reflect the diversity. The self-aware individual shares in divine power and majesty; the totally ignorant person thinks he is the body and caters only to the needs and comforts of the body.

Identification with the body makes him prone to suffering from excessive desires which expose him to fear, anxiety, lust, anger, pride, etc. as a consequence. The heaven/hell dichotomy is absent in Akan doctrine. All will become divine, eventually.

This principle of unity in diversity, rather than conflict and strife, guides the Akan in his personal life, (wo yonko da ne woda; i.e. the bed you make for your neighbour is the same one you will lie in), as well as the organisation of his society (wo amma wo yonko antwa nkron a, wonso wonya du ntwaa; i.e. your right to ten is can be exercised if, and only if, your neighbour's right to nine is guaranteed).

The esoteric significance of the title 'Nana', which every Akan 'Ohene' or 'Ohemaa' bears, has been clarified and 'Nananom Nsamanfuo', means the 'Enlightened Ones' rather than 'ancestral spirits'.

Anatomical analysis of prayer has shown that the Akan congregational prayer, 'Nsa Guo' is as valid a prayer as any offered to the Supreme Deity and has no resemblance to the Judaic tradition of libation pouring. Therefore, 'Nsa Guo' cannot be described as 'Pouring Libation'.

The concluding chapter will make interesting reading for those toying with the idea of Africanising the Christian religion or Christianising Africa.

Book available at: Amazon Books; search by title.

Dedication

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Kofi Danso | 4/17/2015 4:15:00 PM

Seriously?... come on ... This heavy indictment of the modern Akan man, is as if to say: Akans through history haven't been borrowing from other cultures.. The fact of the vast difference in sophistication between our old Akan culture and Western culture is exactly why the typical modern Akan man treats his "heritage" that way."the traditional ways of the Akan", Western culture, whoeverElse's culture,... these are tools for humans to use. Every man should be free to choose his ideals..My being Akan does not Obligate me to live or think some particular way. My ancestors have been adopting stuff from others to best adapt. And I am no different in that regard. what would be the Akan counterparts to ideas(or words) like these: sado masochistic, propinquity, a trillion, quintillion, etc.? Westerners have adopted a great deal from others, and are great for it.. Western culture is the closest to an International culture, and I fail to see why "African Traditionalists" continue to unsuccessfully malign it.

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Elizabeth Shue Was Gorgeous in the 80s.. But What She Looks Like Today is Incredible

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